Media Relations Best Practices

1. **No matter what type of program your chapter or region is conducting, there are several ways you can capture the attention of your local audience.**
   a. Be knowledgeable about the types of media that will garner attention. These include, but are not limited to: traditional (radio, tv, newspaper) as well as social media. Be sure you are aware of the guidelines that pertain to the type of advertising/public relations that you want to accomplish.

2. **Look at opportunities in audience-to-audience marketing.** User-generated reviews are a permanent fixture in the social media landscape. Members of the audience are interested in what other audience members have to say. Talk radio is the old-media equivalent.
   a. In talk radio, it's more obvious where the radio station puts its ads. It is not so obvious how to monetize audience-to-audience content. But, it does provide PR opportunities. When writing your press release for Talk radio, be conversational, yet to the point. Exclude the "fluff" unless it is really pertinent.

3. **What's in it for my readers/listeners/viewers?** Many people who contact the media looking for coverage have never talked with the news reporter or anyone else in search of having their story reported. By giving them an angle, a reason why your press release is relevant to their audience, you have a better chance of having your inquiry returned or better yet, the event covered. When writing the news release, Keep it simple. If you are sending this release to a newspaper or the electronic media, always include a picture of the "newsmaker" and be sure to write "PHOTO OPP" at the top of the release.
   a. I once threw a curveball at someone who pitched me for coverage. I asked if she ever listened to my newscasts. She replied in an annoyed tone, "I don't have time to flip around the dial." But I'm supposed to have time to read her press release?
   b. Here's a good opener: "I saw your recent issue on a portrait of Jewish Americans and thought you would find our Executive Director's views on that topic useful."

4. **Start your own blog.** Make sure you keep it focused, so people have good reason to come back repeatedly. Offering high-value information and links to resources elsewhere builds loyalty and a following. It also has the following positive effects:
   a. Your outstanding blog becomes another media outlet that wields its own sphere of influence.
   b. People will request links and coverage from you. There's nothing more instructive than being on the receiving end of a PR pitch to understand what it feels like and how to better craft your own pitches.
   c. The publishing frequency of your Website will increase, which often impresses search-engine spiders. They like fresh content on any given topic.
   d. There is no doubt that you gain a certain amount of street credibility when you don't just talk the talk, but you walk the walk as well by doing for yourself what you suggest your clients do.

5. **Use press releases for inbound links.** Most communities have more than one news outlet. The press-release distribution should also include any local offices of the Associated Press and other

network offices. Broadcast/News personnel who work in these 24/7 staffed offices are always looking for fresh ideas/stories that they can pitch to a larger audience.

6. **Send your press releases/stories to Elyse Goldberg (egoldberg@bbyo.org) to post on bbyo.org.**
   a. BTW: Make sure your press releases have no typos.

7. **Start an email list for your press releases.** Invite your press contacts to join this list, but don't add anyone's email address without their permission. That would be counterproductive.
   a. When you start your own email list, think hard about how each email you send will bring value to the subscriber.

8. **Your Circle of Influence** can help us raise awareness for our causes. Leverage those individuals that can open doors for you in a variety of ways.

9. **Wrap-Up**
   a. The way we use media is changing dramatically, there are certain things that will never change. If you want to get someone's attention, you have to offer them something interesting, whether it's a white paper, social media, or a PR pitch on the telephone. People will always appreciate value. Good PR, in my estimation, always does offer good value.

Post Event Coverage for "Catching Fire" Events

Follow directions: *Lionsgate is very specific on Pre-event coverage surrounding community pre-screenings of Catching Fire.*

If your region/council is hosting a pre-screening that made an impact on the community, you need to tell that story after the event. Say part of your *Catching Fire* pre-screening included a canned food drive and/or held a fundraiser that raised a considerable amount of money for Hunger in the local area. You will mostly likely want the media to cover that number after the event. The best way to receive this type of media coverage is to capture a visual from the event (such as your teen leadership handing a large check to a nonprofit organization or the amount of bins that were filled during the canned food drive) and sending a press release with the photo to reporters who might be interested.

A few events that would require post-event media coverage include fundraisers, philanthropic events and panel discussions.

It is always important to understand the goals of your region /council event and what type of media coverage will help you attain that goal.

You must do your part and get your message across quickly and clearly, plus have enough presence that people will listen, believe what you say, and act on it. That requires media practice long before a reporter calls to ask for an interview.

Social Media-General Guidelines

Why Use Social Media?
A successful PR campaign today should include social media strategies and support. Your public is out there, networked and interactively discussing information of vital importance to you. You must decide how, when and where to participate.

It is important to create the proper content for your current social media presence, develop strategy, and implement and/or manage social media accounts for your long-term PR plan, as well as combine their use with traditional PR efforts for more specific events and/or company announcements.

Blogging
Blogging is a key component to establishing you and your region/council as thought leaders within your industry.

Twitter
Twitter is a valuable tool for developing brand awareness, establishing your region/council reputation in a particular field, engaging with relevant communities and stakeholders, and providing superior customer service.
- *Twitter Management*
  From setting up your region/council Twitter account to enrolling in Twitter training sessions and analytics reporting, it is easy and safe to manage a Twitter account.
- *Twitter Strategy*
  Make sure you define goals, strategically find and follow the best and brightest in our industry, decide on and develop your unique voice, and understand Twitter analytics reports. By planning a strategy, you will be positioned to maintain and benefit from a valuable Twitter account.

Facebook
Facebook is the Mecca of social networking sites and a destination for businesses looking to build their brand through direct engagement with customers and make their transition into the world of e-commerce.
- *Facebook Strategy*
  Using your desired goals to construct updates and execute custom Facebook strategies for members, parents, prospects, FAN and others who are following your online community.

LinkedIn
LinkedIn sits at the top of the list as far as professional branding and networking is concerned, and offers the opportunity to connect with colleagues, current and potential business leads, future employees and business leaders from around the globe.
- *LinkedIn Management*
  Engage with your professional audience by targeting relevant industry groups and outside organizations for discussions on topics pertinent to client expertise.
- *LinkedIn Strategy*
  Include the best content in your LinkedIn profile when engaging with other individual and professional groups through the network.